

Every developed country in the world looks to their own resources to fuel their economies. We have access to resources that dwarf the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and we can finally put our country on a path to energy independence. The United States has vast energy resources on our public lands and off our coasts that belong to the taxpayers.

This is why I've introduced the Lease Extension and Secure Energy Act of 2011. This bill would extend offshore leases impacted by the Obama administration's drilling moratorium for an additional 12 months. This legislation would return time lost during the drilling moratorium, adding certainty so domestic producers can continue exploration without a looming lease expiration.

We need the stability that comes from an all-of-the-above energy approach. We need a commonsense energy policy that brings stability to the marketplace, creates good paying American jobs, grows our economy, reduces our dependence on foreign oil, and raises trillions of dollars to help pay off our growing \$14 trillion national debt. We owe this to our children and to our grandchildren.

IN HONOR OF ANN'S CHOICE

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, this past week, I had the privilege of addressing about 700 residents back home in my district, the residents of the Ann's Choice retirement community in Warminster Township, Bucks County, and to thank those residents and senior citizens for collectively putting together over 55,000 hours of community service, really outstanding community service, back home in Bucks County.

Some of the many activities that accounted for a tremendous amount of hours included tutoring and reading to elementary school children, providing wheelchair escorts, sorting and packaging clothing for the needy, creating blankets for ill children, and providing comfort to those in need.

Mr. Speaker, communities are built on service to others. Through this service, the community of Ann's Choice is, in fact, strong and vibrant. The countless lives they have touched have made Bucks County a stronger and better place to live, and for that I salute them.

□ 1310

CATASTROPHIC CUTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SCHRADER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a little bit about

what has been going on recently. We heard a little colloquy just a moment ago with the majority leader and the minority leader talking about what is going on in H.R. 1 and some of the catastrophic cuts that are being proposed by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I spoke earlier during the debate on H.R. 1, and found from communications that the people back in my district in Oregon are taking it seriously. They are worried that we will do the devastating \$60 billion worth of cuts within a short, 1-year time frame that has been universally panned, actually, by experts across the country.

My colleagues and I on the Democratic side have offered alternatives that I think are a little more reasonable. We realize, as the gentleman from Maryland talked about, we need to make some reductions, but we should make them in a serious way, something that will accomplish our goals. I think scaring Americans needlessly is inappropriate.

The cuts they are talking about are not going to happen. The Food and Drug Administration, we just passed a food safety bill in the last Congress, and they want to cut \$240 million below the 2010 level, much less implement the Food and Drug Safety Administration work that we have asked them to do. USDA would be furloughing inspectors. Our meat safety programs would not be safe. We would not be able to have the processing plants inspected on a regular basis going forward.

The ability for some of our small, rural communities to have safe drinking water hinges on the wastewater and drinking programs that we have, the revolving loan funds that we have here in Congress. Reducing the programs as much as Republicans want would cause serious, serious problems. It would also eliminate 54,000 engineering, construction, and support jobs as a result of this. We need to be adding jobs, not subtracting jobs at this point in time.

We also have State and local grants. We have States back home, and our local communities are starving right now. A lot of the budgets are out of whack. The worst thing we can be doing is cutting our State grant programs which fund the education, public safety, and health care needs of our local communities. We should actually be empowering and helping them through these tough budget times, and only the Federal Government has that ability.

The firefighter grants are being cut. COPS grants are being cut. Our public safety is at serious risk here. I can't believe this is being proposed in any serious manner whatsoever. I have to assume it is all part of the political theater and part of the campaign trail and quit the political circus and get back to actually worrying about serious reductions we have to make to put our country back in balance, and that means going to other programs.

They are also wanting to cut title 1 grants to school districts. This is the

one area where the Federal Government actually comes to the aid of the local school districts with special ed and IDEA moneys that they need to actually make sure that they can deliver those high-cost special needs programs to students. We are actually cutting them: \$700 million from the two big formula programs we have here. It is a 4 percent cut to title 1 programming when our local districts need it the most.

Head Start, a proven, performance-based program to get our kids off to a great start and a great education so they don't need the remediation that we have to do later on in high school and college. They are cutting Head Start 20 percent, so 200,000 children would be kicked out of the Head Start program. I don't think that's the way you become a world leader. I don't think that is going to help our STEM programs do the research and innovation we need.

Pell Grants. Pell Grants, a commitment we made to American students, I think it is really important. Back home in Oregon, I worked very, very hard on a scholarship program that actually, with our Federal aid, our State aid, scholarship programs, parental involvement, and student working at a minimum wage job during the summer full time and during the school year part-time, the student could actually graduate from college with an undergraduate degree and no more than \$13,000 or \$14,000 in debt. When we take our share of the bargain away by cutting the Pell Grant program from our promised level of \$5,500 down to \$4,700, that can make the difference between young men and women actually being able to afford that college education so they can compete with the best and brightest around the world.

Job training. It is unbelievable to me that in H.R. 1, our Republican colleagues are cutting job training employment services; more than \$4 billion in cuts to job training programs. This is unconscionable, folks. This is exactly the time when we need to get these dislocated workers back into the workforce. The Trade Adjustment Act cuts are unconscionable. We need to make sure that there is an opportunity for these folks to retrain, get back in the workforce, pay taxes, and help get the economy back on track. Cutting these programs just doesn't make any sense.

They are even cutting Social Security, folks. Pretty amazing. They cut the operational budget from \$125 million below the 2010 level, and \$1 billion dollars below the President's requested level for 2011. They apparently don't think that we need technology to improve Social Security's ability to work with seniors and make sure that they get the services they need, to cut down on mistakes and to cut down on the fraud and abuse in the benefit programs for our deserving Social Security recipients. They don't care. They really don't care. It is pretty amazing the range and scope of these cuts.

We have listened to Ben Bernanke in the Budget Committee say that the Republican plan would result in hundreds of thousands of jobs lost in this country. Mark Zandi, McCain's economist, he puts a number on it of 700,000 jobs lost. Goldman Sachs, not exactly a paragon of liberal virtue, said it would really hit our GDP, maybe 2 percent.

We need jobs, we need jobs, we need jobs. We have to be smart how we go about this. Right now we need surgical cuts, not the meat ax approach that is being proposed by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

I offered a proposal during the debate that would have cut our budget by about \$22 billion. It is kind of a nice intermediate approach as I see it from where the Senate is and where our colleagues started. It also looks at the defense budget. I am a huge supporter of our warriors overseas and in this country. They do great things, whether it is a local disaster or a serious problem abroad. But we have to look at the contracting and the weapons procurement programs. Secretary Gates has been very, very clear that there is lots of room, lots and lots of room for improvement there.

I think we need to work on a bipartisan approach. Enough of the political theater, frankly, on both sides. It is time to sit down and look at the individual programs and services that are most in need for this country right now. And until we are willing to sit down and do that, we are going to continue to do these 2- or 3-week continuing resolutions that make a mockery out of the greatest country in the world, funding the Federal Government of the United States of America 2 weeks at a time. I think there is nothing that makes us look more foolish in the world's eyes and in our own constituents' eyes and to the folks at home. It is time for us to really move forward.

There has been a lot of bashing of our public sector employees across the Nation. A public sector job is apparently a bad thing. Well, I am here to tell you in my corner of the universe in Oregon, the public sector employer is oftentimes the biggest employer, and sometimes the only employer of any real size in some of these communities. The school districts, the school districts in rural Oregon are oftentimes the big employer. These are good jobs. These are people, teachers who are giving of their time. And, frankly, my wife is a teacher, she is working overtime, after hours, putting their own dollars sometimes into the kitty to make sure our kids get a great education. The demagoguery that goes on of the public sector is, I think, unfortunate and out of place here.

The hospitals in rural parts of our country are oftentimes the biggest employer. Oftentimes they are public hospitals; they are not private operations. Not-for-profit hospitals, there are a bunch of them in Oregon, and they are huge employers. That has got to be rec-

ognized. Again, the demagoguery, I just don't think has any place.

□ 1320

Right now, I point to a project that's going on along the central coast of the great State of Oregon, which is moving the NOAA fleet, the Pacific NOAA fleet, down into a small community that has been devastated for years, not just by this recent recession, but by over 20 years of strife. Fishing has been cut back. Fishing grounds have been cut back. Timber has been cut back. You can't cut any trees anymore in our State. They've been hurting for a long time. The recession has added to it. They've tried to go into the tourism business, and that has been hit, obviously, with what has gone on in this recession.

As a result of that, we actually have a very exciting opportunity for the Pacific NOAA fleet to come down and regenerate that economy, providing thousands of new jobs, with hundreds immediately related to the NOAA project, itself. For all the parts, all the remediation, all the opportunities to partner in the community, there should be some great opportunities, I think, for the central Oregon coast. This would all be put in jeopardy because the Commerce budget and the NOAA budget are cut.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Would the gentleman yield at this point?

Mr. SCHRADER. I yield to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I thank the gentleman for yielding since he has just made a good litany of ill-intentioned potential cuts by the Republicans.

You just mentioned NOAA. I'd like to point out that, as we're speaking, we're waiting for the third tidal wave to hit the Oregon coast. They're about an hour apart. We should be hit again in about 10 minutes.

Now, the reason we know where these waves are, what their amplitude is, what the potential for damage is, the reason we were able to evacuate those communities last night, and the reason we're online right now with our State emergency services people is because of the warning buoys we have and because of the great work of the National Oceanic Atmospheric Association and the National Weather Service.

The Republicans have proposed to decimate those programs in H.R. 1. So, in the Republican world, when everybody at NOAA is furloughed for 21 days, if there happens to be an earthquake in Japan and if you live on the Pacific Coast or if there are some tornadoes in the Midwest, tough luck, sorry. We had to furlough those employees who would have warned you to go to your tornado shelter. We had to furlough those employees who would have warned you to evacuate the low-lying areas on the Oregon-California Coast and in Hawaii. But, no, they have targeted massive cuts in the NOAA budget—\$450 million. It's estimated that NOAA, because of the time of year

these would be put in place, would have to have 21 days of furloughs for all of its employees. There will be \$110 million in cuts to the National Weather Service and a big cut to State disaster preparedness grants.

So, right now, our Emergency Operations Centers in Oregon, in California, in Hawaii are in full swing. The reason that they're able to be in touch with people in scattered coastal communities and in relatively difficult areas to access, which could be cut off if the waves are bad enough, is because of the Federal assistance that we have given to them to set up these centers. Under the Republicans' budget, we would cut \$206 million from State Emergency Operations Centers.

Now, where are the States going to get the money in this bad climate? I guess those places won't be tended to either.

So we won't know the tidal waves are coming because they'll have laid off the people at NOAA. We won't know the tornadoes are happening. Even if we did happen to stumble over that fact despite these cuts, we won't have the Emergency Operations Centers to coordinate in order to evacuate people and to rescue and to coordinate medical services.

Mr. DICKS. Will the gentleman yield to me on that same point?

Mr. SCHRADER. Absolutely.

Mr. DICKS. Being from Washington State, I am as concerned as the gentleman is about the west coast. We have a number of Indian tribes that are right down at the coastal waters, and several of them are trying to move back because of a tsunami. This is a great wake-up call.

One of the things I'm worried about are the satellites. We have new satellites that we're supposed to be procuring. This program is in some trouble, and I'm worried that these cuts are going to affect the ability of NOAA to get these satellites in a proper time. They give us the warning on major weather fronts. This is another important aspect of this. FEMA is another problem.

I just want to rise to congratulate the two gentlemen from Oregon for bringing this to the floor as we watch to see how these tsunamis hit the west coast of the United States. I mean, some of the weather forecasters have said that this could be a very serious problem, but we hope it isn't. I just wanted to associate myself with the remarks that have been made here and stress how important the NOAA budget is and the importance of getting these satellites replaced in a timely way.

Mr. DEFAZIO. If the gentleman would just yield again.

Mr. SCHRADER. Indeed.

Mr. DEFAZIO. This all seemed to have started with our former colleague, Bobby Jindal, now the Governor of Louisiana, when last year or the year before last he made fun of money that was being appropriated for volcano monitoring. I'll tell you, actually, that

I live in a region that has a number of dormant volcanoes—not extinct, but dormant—and it is crucial.

Three Sisters has got a bulge on it. We're watching that all the time. There is the potential for a big lahar that could wipe out some communities and people downstream. Certainly, up in the Seattle area, there are concerns about Mt. Rainier. We have Mt. Hood and others.

So all of these attacks on emergency services seem to come with all of the juice that Bobby Jindal got out of criticizing volcano monitoring. Well, I think it's pretty darned important to monitor volcanoes, too.

Mr. DICKS. We've had a volcano. Mount St. Helens erupted and it was enormous. I had been told again and again when I was chairman of Interior that California has a very complex system of detection. The rest of the country doesn't. Washington and Oregon do not have the same level of early warning equipment. So I think this is another thing that we've got to work on.

Again, these cuts are going to make it more difficult for us to get the equipment that we need to predict and to detect when these things are occurring. I worry about Mt. Rainier. Mt. Rainier could have the lahar, and we've been told by USGS that Washington State could have a 9. This was 8-9, and look at the enormous damage that was done there. I mean, we could have another major event in the future. I hope it doesn't happen, but it does happen every 300 or 400 years.

Mr. SCHRADER. It may even be sooner than that.

I mean, you can't help but note the devastation wrought by the earthquake in New Zealand just very recently and now here in Japan. This is the Pacific Rim, the volatile Pacific Rim. So I think there are a great deal of problems that we've got to be careful of.

The good Congresswoman from Hawaii is feeling the brunt of it right now. I yield to the gentlewoman.

Ms. HIRONO. Thank you very much.

I thank the two gentlemen from Oregon for bringing this matter to our attention.

I think we make a very serious mistake when, in a fervor to cut budgets and to do it in a meat-ax way, we cut the very programs that we're going to need to rely upon in times like this, meaning in the times of the kind of devastation that has hit Japan. Of course, Hawaii is the first U.S. State to be hit with the tidal wave that followed that disaster, and it's still playing out. We still haven't done the "all clear" sign in Hawaii, by the way.

With the kinds of cuts that we are contemplating in H.R. 1, FEMA is going to have a major impact. I also want to say, before I go further, that our hearts go out to the people of Japan, and we stand ready to assist them in any way. I think that it is so important at a time like this that we have the resources to employ the best technology, cutting-edge equipment,

well-trained personnel to respond when these emergencies occur.

In fact, when this tragedy occurred in Japan, they dedicated Federal employees at the National Weather Service at a specific tsunami warning center, and they were there to provide advance warning to the people of our islands. This early warning allowed the Coast Guard, Hawaii State Civil Defense, and the other State and county officials to put into motion the State's emergency warning response plans.

This whole thing began to unfold in Hawaii in the very early morning hours. I'm just grateful that all of our first responders had everything they needed in order to be able to take the appropriate action. They had to decide whether or not schools would be open and whether public buildings were going to remain open. In fact, they did evacuate people in the low-lying areas just to make sure that the safety of our people and of our visitors would be protected.

So, right now, the reports are encouraging in Hawaii. There has been some flooding on several islands, but the level of damage, however, thankfully, is not severe. There have been no reports of injuries or fatalities, but as I mentioned, the "all clear" sign is not there yet.

□ 1330

So the kind of cuts to FEMA, we mentioned already the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, would have seen its budget cut by \$454.3 million, including our \$126 million cut to the National Weather Service. So there goes advance warning.

The cuts would not have spared the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, either. And according to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's analysis, cuts to FEMA and the Coast Guard would have totaled \$441 million. This includes a \$105 million cut to the Coast Guard's acquisition, construction and improvement accounts, money for ships and equipment to deal with emergencies; a \$50 million cut to FEMA's Interoperable Emergency Communication Grants program, money that helps our first responders get the equipment to communicate with each other.

This was a huge problem when 9/11 occurred, where our first responders could not keep track of what was going on, couldn't talk to each other. So a \$35 million cut to FEMA's predisaster mitigation grants, hurting our communities' ability to implement necessary prevention measures against threats.

So we've heard all the time about we should learn to do more with less. Well, in our Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing where we had the people from the Coast Guard come to testify, these kinds of cuts mean that they really are facing doing less with less. And we also hear about how families understand the need to cut. Well, when families cut, they do less with less.

So these kinds of slogans and the kind of meat-ax approach to the kinds of cuts we're looking at in H.R. 1 are devastating, and especially now when we are once again confronted with a huge, huge natural disaster in Japan that can have ramifications particularly on Hawaii and the west coast.

It, again, shows the foolishness of these kinds of massive cuts that really disable our ability to deal with these disasters.

Mr. SCHRADER. I appreciate the gentlelady's comments. We have some breaking news from southern Oregon.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Yes, exactly. I just got an email—and I've got to go take a phone call in the Cloak Room—but they just announced that some heavy waves have come into the harbor at Coos Bay. This would be the third period of waves. They say the fourth or the fifth might be the worst. The port tells me the docks are breaking apart. Luckily—since we had ample warning because we still do have NOAA and we still do have buoys before these Republican cuts go into effect—there were no people on the docks. At this point we're not aware that anyone has been injured. But this is a serious and developing situation. And I would expect the gentleman's district just north of mine is probably having a similar experience in Newport or other areas.

Mr. SCHRADER. Well, we're on the phone right now trying to make sure that the folks are safe. I do know that schools have been evacuated, and the lower elevations that are very flood prone, they've taken precautions. Thank goodness, thanks to the comments I've heard from the gentlelady from Hawaii and the Congressman from Washington as well as my colleague from Oregon, we have some of these programs in place that can actually save lives and make sure that the economic infrastructure hopefully in the future is not at risk.

Just this morning I had a visit from Mark Apple with Oregon State University talking about a program that's in danger because of these cuts, because of the cuts to the National Science Foundation programs, along with NIH and anything else that's got research that the Republicans are trying to cut away.

They've got a great project. They've hired 25 people already. They're putting buoys on the floor of the ocean and sensing devices to actually have real-time monitoring of ocean conditions so we can actually anticipate what's going to be happening long before it actually hits our coast. We can also plan—plan our fisheries, plan what we need to do with ocean acidification that's devastating the oysters up and down the Pacific coast and actually in other parts of the world right now.

The leading research is being done in my district on oyster larva and trying to make sure that ocean acidification does not cause a problem. That stuff is in danger right now. I don't think some of my colleagues on the other side of

the aisle understand how important this stuff is. So we're going to have to be watching very, very carefully, I think, going forward and make sure that there are not these bludgeoning deep cuts that are not really smart.

Where is the discussion about the duplicative programs? We just had a great GOP report. I've heard a lot of posturing on the other side. Where is it? It's not included in H.R. 1. I mean, look at this. In Afghanistan and Iraq we've got USAID programs and Department of Defense rebuilding the country. There's not even a centralized data system that tracks U.S. funds used. I mean, that's crazy. Why aren't we looking at that? Why isn't that part of what we're working on?

Our domestic food assistance programs. There are 18 different programs. I want to see something in a budget resolution or a proposal going forward that talks about streamlining some of this stuff, that the data collection, the administration of these programs you can save millions and millions—perhaps billions of dollars. And here is a quote: "Little is known of the effectiveness of some of these programs because they have not been well studied."

Job training. I talked about job training. They're taking a meat ax to it. There are 47 programs in job training. Let's get those organized so we can leverage the limited dollars we're going to be able to put forward in these tough economic times.

Same thing for transportation for the disadvantaged, 80 different programs; laudable, but let's get together on this. Again, there doesn't need to be 80 different programs. Where are my colleagues' concrete proposals? They're in charge; they're the majority party. Where are their concrete proposals to improve this, for goodness sakes?

Military health, veteran services. We've got to do right by our men and women who have served this country through times good and times bad. Our responsibilities are distributed so far widely we can't even get critical procurement centralized opportunities that would save billions of dollars, billions and billions of dollars.

We also have a situation where the Department of Defense now, if they conveniently need some money, rather than go through appropriate channels, they have urgent needs processes for developing, modifying and fielding new military capabilities. Well, that's being abused, folks. GAO found eight entities that respond to them, five for counter-IED technologies, and they have no way of tracking the system for this program, no way of tracking metrics for this program. Must be nice to be able to spend the taxpayers' money with no accountability.

I was at a dinner the other night working on some budget issues, and it came out that when the Department of Defense was asked about contracting—how many civilian folks do you have under contract, how many people are you contracting with—their answer

was, somewhere between 1 million and 10 million. I mean, that's a big range, folks; that's a big range.

The Department of Defense has no clue as to how and what they're doing. Where is that money being spent? We cannot afford rampant, undisciplined—unauditable has been the term used—spending in the Department of Defense. They're supposed to report their budget annually, come in with a coherent budget. It has been determined that it is unauditable, folks. I mean, we talk about the domestic side—and, yes, there are certain things we can do, as I'm talking about here, to improve the programs, but it's also on the defense side that we've got to get our act together.

Let's talk about economic development. I mean, we want to make sure we're getting the biggest bang for the buck here. We have 80 different economic development programs spread through Commerce, HUD, USDA, Small Business Administration. I mean, it's all good that we're doing that, but let's have some centralized opportunities. Let's leverage the resources.

In my home State of Oregon when I was budget chair, we would see the Federal Government's money come in. It was all different programs tied with all these little strings. It made it very difficult for my local agencies and my local communities to use the money. Very, very inflexible. And that's got to end. We've got to break down these silos, allow people to work across the spectrum so that we can get the biggest bang for the buck.

I would also point out that in our surface transportation programs we work really hard trying to keep America competitive. In H.R. 1, there are huge cuts to the transportation budget. If we're going to be competitive going forward like we were after World War II when Eisenhower, a Republican President, and Congress put together a secure highway fund, realizing that our security depended on having interstate highways that were connected, you could travel at a reasonable rate, we need to be thinking along those same lines now.

If they were worried about the cost of that program and not the security of this country or the economic benefits, it would never have gotten off the ground. I mean, this is a capital program. And, again, my colleagues across the aisle don't seem to understand the difference between an operational budget and a capital budget.

□ 1340

We need to be making infrastructure investments right now.

There is an opportunity for America, probably a narrow window—I'd say the next 10 years—for us to be competitive going forward with the rest of the world. Right now, the developing nations that are pretty developed, like China, India, they're developing 21st century infrastructure. We're still dealing with a 20th century infrastruc-

ture, and that's not going to cut it, colleagues. That's just not going to get the job done.

We've got to be thinking about making the strategic investments so our businesses can be competitive worldwide around the globe.

Right now, there's a new enterprise in my home State of Oregon on the coast that's currently under siege through the natural disasters where they're actually trying to export Dungeness crab—the best crab in the world, with no disrespect to my colleagues from Maryland. But the best crab in the world comes from the Pacific coast, the north coast, if you will, Dungeness crab.

They're now able to export live crab to China. But the hurdles to go through to get there are almost insurmountable. That was started back in 2003. They tried to get a program going. And because of the difficulties in transporting and some of the bureaucratic redtape to go through that, it didn't work.

They have now come up with a much more viable program for a whole new industry to really export to China. Instead of China exporting here and hurting our jobs, we're creating jobs in the Pacific Northwest and exporting high-quality products to China. We need more of that sort of innovation going forward. That's the type of investment in infrastructure.

We shouldn't have to ship it to Vancouver, B.C., to get it over there on a direct flight. We should be able to have a direct flight from Portland, Oregon, to make that actually happen.

So I think we're missing the boat here in terms of what we're trying to effect and the issues I think that we're dealing with in this H.R. 1. We're trying to hit only domestic programs, programs that our kids depend on. Penalizing the kids of the future.

Oftentimes, I hear my colleagues across the aisle talking about we've got to worry about our kids and our grandkids. I see the photos brought to the floor. Well, let's worry about our kids and grandkids and support the education programs I talked about earlier. Let's support the early health care prevention programs that were in the health care bill last Congress, make sure our kids don't suffer from the same problems that are debilitating obese Americans right now.

I mean, we know that prevention is important. We must be funding prevention. We need the innovation to come up with the programs to make sure that our chronic diseases are under control. The health care cuts in H.R. 1 are unbelievable. I know it's politically their big mantra to roll back or repeal health care reform, but folks, that is the wrong way to go right now. Our health care system is broken. We desperately need some help.

I welcome my colleague from the north coast of Oregon.

Mr. WU. I thank the gentleman, my friend, and the adjoining Representative on my southern border and my colleague from the State of Oregon.

We rise together, and I rise today to recognize the tremendous tragedy that has struck Japan early this morning. This tragedy follows on other tragedies similar in nature that affected Chile earlier this year and Haiti in the very recent past.

We in the Pacific Northwest feel a special connection to these events because we have the Cascadia fault off the coast of Washington, Oregon, and northern California. And about a 250-mile stretch of the Cascadia fault is locked tight. With great regularity since the last Ice Age 12,000 years ago—the furthest back that we can reach in our studies—this fault locked up, has snapped and created earthquakes of 9.0 magnitude, very similar to the 8.9 Richter scale-magnitude earthquake that struck Japan early this morning.

Our hearts go out to the Japanese people and to their friends and relatives who are here in the United States.

We have an obligation, and we have an ability to mitigate these problems, to plan for them, and to reduce the risk to the American people and to Oregonians. My All Hazards legislation passed in the last Congress addresses these risks in a comprehensive way. By uniting the risks of fire, wind, flood, and earthquakes we can better allocate scarce resources in this era of scarce resources so that we can get a better buy on the Federal dollar.

Different agencies are involved in reducing the risk of earthquake. We know about FEMA and how it can do a great job and how it can do a poor job. FEMA is primarily engaged in the business of recovering from natural disasters, and it is part of the All Hazards legislation that I passed last session.

NIST, one of the agencies under the jurisdiction of the subcommittee which I chaired last Congress, NIST is in the business of prevention, of researching what causes building failure, of doing model codes, of promulgating model codes so that the local and State building codes can encourage and, indeed, require more earthquake-resistant buildings and, indeed, also other infrastructure such as rail lines, bridges, and airports. These are all important infrastructure that in Chile survived to a decent extent.

With the severe earthquake in Japan, even with Japan's high standards, a remarkable number of structures are currently incapacitated, and we can do better and we will do better by adequately supporting these very important research and standard-setting agencies.

Furthermore, an agency that Mr. SCHRADER talked about, NOAA, that is going to bring jobs to Oregon. And an important part of Mr. SCHRADER's congressional district, but important to the whole Northwest and to our Nation, indeed, NOAA does a crucial serv-

ice by helping to support education, educating not just our young people but all citizens about earthquakes and especially tsunami.

It is these people just out of college who are funded with fellowships, and they call together sessions—and I've seen these sessions convene in our State of Oregon—and they educate the residents about how to reduce their risk, how to behave during an earthquake, how to evacuate and the best routes to take to escape the follow-on tsunami. These are crucial activities to surviving an earthquake and the earthquake's natural consequence off our coast, a tsunami.

And it's not just the residents of the coast, because the population of the coast is swelled several times by inland residents who come to Oregon's beautiful shoreline. And those students and those adults also need this education so that, instead of going out to the shore to look at a receding waterline, which many people in Indonesia did—you know, it's a natural curiosity; right? And you don't necessarily know that a tsunami is about to follow.

This kind of education is so you know to head for high ground right now. Don't delay. As soon as the ground stops moving, head for high ground. This inexpensive education will save lives. It's what has been done in some parts of the world, and it has saved lives. It hasn't been done in other parts of the world, and the casualty figures reflect it.

The All Hazards legislation which I was able to pass in the last Congress knits these different components together: NOAA for education purposes; NIST to set standards, to do research, to prevent building collapses and bridge collapses and other collapses which cost us money and business downtime; FEMA to recover from that damage which occurs. These are crucial things to do, and we know what the price of inaction is.

This government has responded heroically and well when minimal, appropriate investments are made. And when those investments aren't made, when the preparing agencies aren't prepared themselves, then we have something like Katrina, where American citizens were found floating face down in the dark waters of New Orleans. We should never, ever fail Americans in that manner again.

And Mr. SCHRADER and Mr. DEFAZIO and I, we'll be darned if we're going to let Oregonians suffer the way that some Americans have had to. Making these small-dollar investments today, we'll save lives tomorrow.

□ 1350

It's the smart thing to do. It's the wise thing to do. It's the right thing to do. Pinch pennies and pound foolish will cost us lives.

Today's tragic earthquake and tsunami that brought devastation to Japan was a stark reminder of the importance of disaster preparedness for Oregon's coastal communities.

Over half of people in the United States reside in coastal areas, and billions of dollars of commercial and recreational activity depend on healthy oceans and coasts.

The efficiency of tsunami response efforts this morning in Oregon, Hawaii, and elsewhere demonstrates the hard work that community officials have already put toward tsunami preparation.

At the same time, we must be ready for the kind of disaster scenario that Japan faced this morning, one that presents much shorter warning times and a devastating ocean surge.

Local officials are doing their part, but the federal government has a critical role to play in hazards preparation and response efforts.

Without continued federal funding for ocean observation, seafloor modeling, and projects that build the infrastructure for withstanding ocean surge, the next tsunami could be devastating to vulnerable ocean communities.

All of the federal R&D agencies, even if it's not their primary mission, have a hand in hazard preparation and response. For example, in the aftermath of last year's devastating earthquake in Haiti, NASA used their satellites and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to predict where mudslides were going to occur.

Our thoughts today are with the people of Japan, who have suffered widespread loss of life and destruction of property. Oregonians and all Americans stand ready to assist the Japanese people in rebuilding and recovery efforts.

Mr. SCHRADER. I thank the gentleman from the north coast of my great State of Oregon for his comments. They're right on the money, and I very appreciated his time.

I would now like to yield some time to the gentlelady from Hawaii, our new Member. Welcome.

Ms. HANABUSA. Thank you, both gentlemen from Oregon.

I would like to first begin by extending heartfelt condolences to the people of Japan, and they should all know that we will stand by them as they work to recover from this tragic disaster. But I would also like to say thank you to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have come up to me today and they've asked a single question. Is everything all right at home? Is your family all right? Do you have family in Japan? It didn't matter whether one was an R or one was a D. Those concerns were extremely genuine.

As I walked over here, the Capitol guard asked me, Ms. HANABUSA, is everything okay at home? And then it struck me what this is all about. We are people, and we are always going to be there to help others.

We must also look at why Hawaii has really been prepared for these kinds of disasters. I do congratulate both the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center, as well as our officials back home who did an excellent job preparing. But I would also like people to consider what it cost and how we were able to come here.

Remember when the good Senator from Hawaii, Senator INOUE, did that unspeakable thing, that earmark called the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

And, yes, it was an earmark. He had the foresight, as only, for example, like my good colleagues from Oregon and people who represent their districts, to know what that district needs and started way back when with the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. And that has grown. If you watched the news this morning, as I did from 3 o'clock in the morning, you could hear them saying, our projections are this, we're looking at what's going on, and we think it's going to be about 2 feet. We got those projections before they hit Hawaii. You know what? They were right. What do we have to attribute to that? The fact that there was wisdom and there was funding and there was the recognition that a Pacific Tsunami Warning Center was essential.

It's not only for Hawaii. It's for the whole Pacific. When they wanted information of what it meant for Guam, what it meant in Japan, what it meant for the west coast, who was the expert? The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. It is unfortunate that in H.R. 1 it stands massive cuts. It is also unfortunate that people look upon it like it's "that earmark" and therefore should be cut.

I ask my same colleagues on both sides who said, Is everything all right at home, to realize that and to recognize that the one way you can help protect not only the people of the State of Hawaii, but the west coast, as well as anyone in the Pacific Rim, is to set aside labels and to recognize that it is funding like that that goes to save lives. That is what we can rely upon.

So when we remember this unfortunate and tragic day, let us also remember how fortunate we were because we had information and we were prepared, and how inexpensive being prepared is when you look at the investments that have been made. Thank you very much.

Mr. SCHRADER. I appreciate the very kind remarks. Indeed, our hearts go out to the people of Japan, much like they did in New Zealand. Very concerned about the health and welfare. I am sure this country will come to their aid like it does in any disaster, and like a lot of our friends did when we suffered similar consequences, whether it's Katrina or the horrible attacks on 9/11. We have had our brothers and sisters around the world come to our aid, and I appreciate that.

I would ask how much time we have left in the hour, if I may.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. SCHRADER. To follow on the gentlelady's remarks, I think there are areas where we can get together. The illusion that cutting the domestic budget for this country, the discretionary budget, is going to solve our woes and put us back in financial balance and avoid the Armageddon that's somewhat before us is a horrible illusion. I don't think my colleagues on the other side of the aisle really believe that's going to be solving any of our problems. Even the defense reduc-

tions that I talked about that are targeted to increase the efficiency of the Department of Defense and make sure our warriors get what they really need, even including the defense budget, it's not going to be getting at the root cause of our debt and deficit problems.

As we all know, those two, domestic and defense discretionary expenses, only account for about 30 percent of the budget for the American people. The bulk of it is tied up in other areas. Our Tax Code is shown to be extremely inadequate. We are collecting revenues now at an all-time low. Yes, some of it's the recession; but it's also because we give away more in tax breaks than we actually spend on domestic and defense programs in this country in the discretionary budget. Yes, \$1.2 billion given away in tax expenditures. We spend money on these tax breaks. It's spending money by giving away all these breaks.

We need to broaden our tax base, quite frankly, and reduce the rates. I think if we're going to get real about solving our budget problems, we need to begin to embrace some of the recommendations, if not the package that the fiscal commission the President set up last year, we need to embrace those recommendations in some form. This is the real meat of the issue, colleagues. This is where the rubber meets the road. If we do not actually have the guts, the political courage to step up and deal with some of these problems, we are mortgaging our children and grandchildren's future.

In the last Congress, much was said about the health care reform. No matter how you feel about that bill, and I said this again and again at town halls back home, no matter how you feel about the bill, you should be in favor of the \$500 billion in savings in the Medicare budget. These are long overdue. A lot of these things weren't new. They had been proposed one Congress after another, but no political will, no political courage to step up and try and take them on.

I think it's important for Americans to understand and respect their leaders, that the people in this body, in this Chamber, and in our sister Chamber across the Capitol Rotunda, that we're willing to step up and make these tough decisions. I don't think anyone wants to pay hospitals for preventable readmissions. I think everyone wants to make sure that the repayment system for our hospitals and our doctors is as efficient as possible. I think everyone wants to make sure that fraudulent companies are not taking advantage of seniors in the Medicare or Social Security system. I think people ought to see our Medicare and support system, our safety net system, if you will, protected. It's really important that we have that opportunity and that we make these tough decisions.

If we're not going to look at tax reform, we're not going to look at Social Security, we're not going to look at Medicare, Medicaid, other mandatory

savings in the budget, we will have missed the boat. I think the people back home get it. I think the only people that don't get it are the people in Congress. It's time that we step up and make some tough decisions and show these people we have some backbone.

There is this little waiting game going on here in Congress right now. I will show a little of my hand if you show a little of your hand. That's fine. I understand everyone wants their "political cover," but it takes leadership, people willing to step up and embrace some of the solutions that are already on the table.

I think there are ways you can do it without causing problems. Indeed, I think you can actually solve problems. You know, I think we need spending caps. We did PAYGO in the last Congress. We only did half of PAYGO. We only dealt with mandatory spending. We need to have the spending caps that were in place when a Democratic President and a Republican Congress instituted PAYGO in the mid-nineties. If we put that in place, then we have real, real control on our domestic and defense spending.

I think if we are going to do reductions, we should prioritize both. Equal cuts in defense and domestic spending, at least for the first few years here. We can at least make sure that there is an opportunity for both sides, if you will. Both sides of the aisle have different priorities, I respect that, but let's treat them equally.

□ 1400

I think that the draconian cuts of \$60 billion or \$100 billion in the President's recommended budget are too draconian. I am worried smarter people than I, as I alluded to earlier in my remarks, have talked about how devastating that would be. We can get to the same result—rolling back to 2008 levels—if that's where we want to go by approaching it in a thoughtful way. The fiscal commission talks about gradually reducing it so that we are at those levels by 2013, and then allowing inflationary increases only. Again, the spending caps would help us.

In the tax reform arena I don't think there is anybody that doesn't want to have their taxes reduced. I would love to see my tax rates go down. Right now, the effective rate for a lot of folks, when you add in the State and local taxes, is nearly 50 percent in my corner of the world. You know, that's terrible.

If we were able to get rid of the tax breaks, get rid of all of the giveaways that we have out there, we could actually reduce the tax rates almost in half. We could reduce our corporate tax rate down to at least 29 percent. Then we would be a little competitive with the rest of the world. There wouldn't be maybe quite so much overseas offshoring of American jobs. It would be more palatable, more appealing to keep these jobs and these businesses and these plants here in America so we

could have Made in America products going overseas instead of importing everything from China or India.

I think if we were to reform the Tax Code along the lines that I am talking about, and that I see in some of the fiscal commission reports, that we could actually use some of that savings to reduce our deficit, seriously, going forward, reducing the deficit on an ongoing basis. Now I am not proposing necessarily that we reduce or get rid of all tax expenditures over the long haul. We should have an opportunity to add back for set periods of time with specific sunsets targeted tax expenditures that help our economy or help those most in need of our help. I think that's the more thoughtful discussion we need to have going forward that's missing so far.

Social Security. Social Security is going to be gone, cut benefits, 25 percent in about 25 years if we do nothing. So if you don't care about Social Security, don't do anything. Don't do anything. That's what we are doing right now. We are not doing anything.

If you care about Social Security, I mean, I have friends, I have friends that are 30 and 40 years old, and they don't expect Social Security to be there when they get of age. And I don't think people already know Social Security's age for full benefits is 67. It's not 65. That was changed back during the Reagan years.

We could do some pretty smart fixes here. The commission talks about raising the retirement age to 69, over 65 years gradually. I know it's going to feel that, we are not going to affect the seniors right now. The seniors right now, full benefits, fully protected. Even those about to become seniors, full benefits just right now.

But if you raise that age to 69 over 25 years or over 65 years, I think that's a pretty good deal if that helps keep Social Security solvent. The payroll tax originally was set up to be roughly 90 percent of payroll. It's down to about 85 and scheduled to go down to about 82 percent of the payroll out there. That's not the way the system was designed.

The system was designed to work at a higher level. If we just go back to that same payroll level that's subject to the same payroll tax to fund Social Security, it helps keep it in balance. And there is early means testing. I mean, I have to admit as a new Member of Congress, a hardworking, small business guy, I was not focused on Social Security. But in Congress it's a big, big thing, and I am getting close enough to where it becomes a personal issue.

I did not know Social Security is already means tested. The commission suggests a little tweaking of that to make sure the poorest of the poor still get good benefits and get maximum needs taken care of. They add another bracket, if you will, in Social Security.

And with those three simple little things, with some hardship exclusions, obviously, for people in tough, labor-in-

tensive jobs, we can make sure that Social Security is protected for the next 75 years as opposed to going away or seeing a 25 percent reduction in just 25 years.

There are smart things we can do, folks. We already started down the road to being smart in our Medicare program. There is discussion of Medicaid. I don't think voucher programs or privatizing have any place in this discussion. But there are smarter ways that we can come together on, Republicans and Democrats, working together to really get at taking care of our country's deficit needs. We can reduce our debt, the deficit, dramatically in the near term if we just pay attention to what I have talked about here.

Let's get off the H.R. 1 bandwagon, the political theater, the circus that's consuming a lot of taxpayer dollars and really not moving this country forward. Let's begin the dialogue right here, right now about taking care of the big cost drivers, the big spending items that are affecting our future and our children and grandchildren's future.

EVEN COWBOY POETS WANT TO CUT SPENDING

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I was absolutely dumbfounded recently when I heard the Senate majority leader slamming the long-term continuing resolution passed by this House, which cut government spending by more than \$100 billion below the President's FY 2011 budget request.

He particularly lamented the elimination of funding for an annual cowboy poetry festival in Nevada.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Senate majority leader that the rugged individualism of the American cowboy will not be snuffed out due to the lack of a Federal subsidy. In fact, I believe that the American cowboy supports our efforts to get this out-of-control Federal spending under control.

Let me quote, Mr. Speaker, from a poem written by Yvonne Hollenbeck, who has been featured at the National Cowboy Poetry Gatherings in Elko, Nevada. The title of her poem is "How to Cut Taxes":

So, I think if I was the President of this home of the free and the brave,

I'd close up all those departments and think of the money I'd save.

Mr. Speaker, this is the poet that I would give a personal subsidy to, and I would hope that our colleagues in the other body would take that good old American cowboy common sense and help us start saving the American people's money.

OBAMACARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Iowa

(Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate being recognized to address you here on the floor of the House of Representatives. I have come to the floor to raise some issues here, to address you and hopefully be able to penetrate with some rationale and logic that I think is essential that the American people benefit from, and that is this, that, for some time now, we have been making the case that there are automatic appropriations in ObamaCare in an unprecedented fashion with regard to the magnitude and the duration of them.

These automatic appropriations were written into the bill in preparation. The automatic appropriations were written into the bill in preparation for and anticipated, I believe, the loss of the majority by the Pelosi Congress, because I think they expected that this Congress would be handed over by the American people to a Republican majority that had been assigned the task by the American people to repeal ObamaCare, to defund ObamaCare.

That's what everyone ran on. There are 87 Republican freshmen here, all of whom have voted to repeal ObamaCare, and I believe all of whom, if they spoke to the issue at all, Mr. Speaker, also pledged to cut off the funding to ObamaCare.

I have sought to facilitate that happening and taking place. In doing so, I have drafted legislation that's patterned after the language that was written into a continuing resolution in April of 1974. That's the language in a continuing resolution that shut off the funding to the Vietnam War.

It says something very similar to this. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no funds made available in this act and no funds heretofore appropriated shall be used for offensive or defensive operations in Vietnam or the countries adjacent to it.

In other words, it's not really an exact quote, but it is the compression of the language, and it's an accurate depiction of what it said. What it did was it shut off all funding for anything that was used to support the South Vietnamese military, including M-16 rounds, 105 rounds, MREs, anything that was going to support a military operation offensive or defensive was shut off by this Congress by language in a CR.

Now, who could conceive, Mr. Speaker, that this Congress couldn't figure out how to write language on how to shut off funding to ObamaCare. They didn't find the Vietnam War unconstitutional. Two Federal courts have found ObamaCare unconstitutional.

□ 1410

I hear arguments that say, well, there is an obscure rule somewhere that says that this is written into a legislation that makes it what they call mandatory spending. Therefore, this Congress, this 112th Congress, is